

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 PM-05
SP-02 INRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-08
TRSE-00 /063 W

-----051483 141257Z /46

O 151155Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 372

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 6209

BRUSSELS PASS USDEL AF DAS WALKER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS CG

SUBJ: CURRENT SOUNDING OF MOBUTU'S ATTITUDES

1. AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN AND LONG-TIME FRIEND OF MOBUTU, MAURICE
TEMPLEMAN, RETURNED LATE JUNE 13 FROM PRIVATE TWO-DAY VISIT
WITH THE PRESIDENT AT GBADOLITE. ON ARRIVAL TEMPLEMAN FOUND
MOBUTU IN HIGHLY DEFENSIVE, AGITATED MOOD, ALTHOUGH AS TIME PASSED
HE BECAME MORE REFLECTIVE.

2. ASIDE FROM TALKING BUSINESS, TEMPLEMAN SAID HE STRESSED TWO
THEMES DURING HIS ENTIRELY PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS WITH MOBUTU:

A. US RELATIONS WITH USSR HAVE GROWN MORE SOPHISTICATED OVER
THE YEARS, AND MOBUTU SHOULD THEREFORE NOT ASSUME THAT HIS FURTHER
PURSUIT OF COLD WAR TACK WILL SERVE TO ELICIT THE KIND OF RESPONSE
US MADE IN THE 1960S. NOW THAT ZAIRE'S IMMEDIATE SECURITY NEEDS
WERE BEING MET, MOBUTU SHOULD CONSIDER POLITICAL SOLUTION INVOLVING
MORE CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE BY GOZ TOWARD SHABA AND RENEWED EFFORT
TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA. LATTER WOULD HAVE TO ENTAIL
PLEDGE NOT TO AID UNITA AND FLNA. GOZ'S BILATERAL EFFORT WITH LUANDA
MIGHT BE SUPPLEMENTED BY OTHER GOVERNMENT'S WORKING WITH BOTH ANGOLA
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AND ITS SUPPORTERS.

B. ON ECONOMIC SIDE, IT WAS EVIDENT THAT IN WAKE OF KOLWEZI
MOBUTU COULD EXPECT DONORS TO BE MORE DEMANDING RE REFORMS AND
THERE WAS ALREADY A LOT OF TALK ABOUT CONDITIONS FOR FUTURE
ASSISTANCE. MOBUTU HAD ANNOUNCED MOST OF THE REFORMS REQUIRED;
WHAT WAS NECESSARY NOW WAS TO IMPLEMENT THEM.

3. ACCORDING TO TEMPLESMAN, MOBUTU WAS QUITE RESPONSIVE TO IDEA OF TAKING POLITICAL INITIATIVE VIS A VIS ANGOLA. BUT MOBUTU WAS CONVINCED NETO WAS NOT RUNNING HIS OWN SHOW AND THAT THERE WOULD THEREFORE HAVE TO BE PARALLEL EFFORTS BY OTHERS, EG, US WITH USSR AND CUBA, AFRICAN LEADERS WITH CUBANS, NETO, ETC.

4. AS FOR ECONOMIC REFORM, MOBUTU INDICATED HE EXPECTED CONDITIONS AND WOULD DO HIS BEST TO MEET THEM. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, WAS TO AVOID THE PUBLIC IMPRESSION OF CONDITIONS BEING FORCED ON ZAIRE;
THE BEST SOLUTION WAS TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT REFORMS WERE BEING TAKEN ON ZAIRE'S INITIATIVE RATHER THAN IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURE FROM THE WESTERN POWERS.

5. COMMENT: TEMPLESMAN OF COURSE HAS HIS OWN INTERESTS TO PURSUE WITH MOBUTU AND HIS COMMENTS MUST BE VIEWED IN THAT LIGHT. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE KNOWS MOBUTU WELL AND IS AN EXPERIENCED OBSERVER OF THE PRESIDENT'S WAYS. HE CAME AWAY ENCOURAGED BY MOBUTU'S EVIDENT DESIRE BOTH TO LISTEN AND TO TALK AND BY HIS GENERALLY THOUGHTFUL, BY NO MEANS NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO WHAT WAS DISCUSSED-- PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO A POLITICAL SOLUTION WITH ANGOLA. HOWEVER, TEMPLESMAN ALSO GAINED DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT MOBUTU IS FEELING SOMEWHAT CORNERED AND THAT HIS FUTURE RESPONSIVENESS WILL DEPEND NOT SO MUCH ON WHAT IS PUT TO HIM, BUT THE WAY IT IS DONE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KINSHA06209
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780248-0496
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780657/aaaabwpt.tel
Line Count: 94
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d69b6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2341995
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CURRENT SOUNDING OF MOBUTU'S ATTITUDES
TAGS: PINS, PDIP, CG, US, UR, (MOBUTU SESE SEKO), (TEMPLESMAN, MAURICE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d69b6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014